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Atari Online News, Etc.
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Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor
Rob Mahlert, Associate Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"
Albert Dayes -- "CC: Classic Chips"
Rob Mahlert -- Web site
Thomas J. Andrews -- "Keeper of the Flame"

With Contributions by:

Kevin Savetz
Jens Heitmann

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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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For a vacation week, overall it has been a disaster! What was supposed to be a week of relaxing things has turned to anything but! It all started last week when I took my truck in for service. Or actually, it was towed in for work. Transmission problems. I was told that the transmission issues could wait, but to monitor the fluid. Fine. They did replace a bad water pump. Great.

Because of this work, I didn't get to Maine to visit my father for Father's Day, or pick up the lawn tractor my brother found for me. No big deal because I was on vacation and had this week to make the trip. We went to Maine Wednesday. Saw my father for awhile, and we then went to visit my brother and pick up the tractor. The rest should be easy to guess. The transmission went bad again. Truck and trailer for the tractor towed. No definite resolution for repair. We rent car and come home. All I know at this point is that a used transmission was located, and mine will be replaced. When, I don't know. So in the meantime, I'm paying for a trailer that is sitting in my brother's yard. The tractor that I bought is elsewhere. And I have a rental car which I'll be paying for until I can get it back to Maine. We're having fun now!!

But, this week wasn't all bad. Even the weather has been better than usual (wait until the weekend, he prophesies!). My flowers are in. My vegetables are in. Most of the mulch is put down. The pool is open. My lawn may get mowed, even without the tractor, if I have to mow it by hand one more time. I enjoy going to Maine to visit my father and brother, but it may be some time (after my next trip to retrieve my truck and tractor) before I head that way again!

Until next time...

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Adamas 1.8 Pre 17 & mgw 0.33b (Draconis News 9/2003)

1. The Light of Adamas

Adamas Pre-Release 17 is a new Version of the Release-Candidate. There were done some small changes, also the communication with MintNet-Gateway was revised.

*** Adamas 1.8 Pre17 ***
* Sizer in frame pages
* Marquee attributes
* Fixed an error when freeing memory for Script defaults.
* Fixed a problem, when accessing "Forbidden" pages.
* Mintnet-Gateway (v33b) - adaption

The Pre-Release is available at:

http://draconis.atari.org/draconis/archives/ada18dev.zip

a 68030 version is available at

http://draconis.atari.org/draconis/archives/ada18d30.zip

2. MintNet-Gateway 0.33b

The MintNet-Gateway is revised regarding the cooperation with Aranym, Mint 1.16 & Adamas 1.8. By installing it with

```
mgw.prg --dns1=IP-Adresse --disable-system-resolve
```

(introduce in mint.cnf for static IP, ip-up for dynamic IP addresses)

it is possible to query the name server asynchronously. This enables that the application will still react to user actions during this phase.

The new MintNet-Gateway is available through the Freemint CVS or a standalone archive is available at:

http://draconis.atari.org/draconis/archives/mgw033b.tgz

--
Jens Heitmann
http://draconis.atari.org
draconis@atari.org

AtarICQ 0.158

At the day of AtarICQ’s 3rd anniversary, there is a new release available. Most of the changes are related to restructuring the source code, but there have also been some quite noticeable changes and additions. Please visit the AtarICQ website to download and read the full story.

http://www.ataricq.org/

Could you have had what it took to be an Atari Program Exchange author? You may never know for sure, but you can now read the APX Program Author's Handbook to get programming and documentation writing advice straight from the mouth of Atari, circa 1982.

http://www.atariarchives.org/APX/authorsguide/

DuSau: A New Game for the Falcon 030

FoundationTwo proudly released "DuSau". The game is a adaption of a card game we played at school some decades ago. The game is a demonstration of AGUIGEN and the underlaying NonConForm lib. AGUIGEN is a Rapid Game Development tool, F2 is creating for 3 years now.

http://www.foundationtwo.de/

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Another week has come and gone and, here in the northeast anyway, it's wet. Damned wet. We came into this year with a rainfall deficit. The almost constant damp weather has taken care of that.... with a vengeance. I'm sure that Dana will be mentioning it in relation to the difficulty it creates for yard work and such. I'm lucky in that I don't have to worry about such things. My landlord takes care of all that. But it would be nice to go couple of days without getting drenched. Hell, I know that there are bigger problems in the world. Lots of them, in fact. And this isn't even really a problem. It's more unexpected than anything else. All things considered, it hardly warrants more than a passing notice.

And, of course, once it's all behind us we'll either forget about it entirely or remember it as a major inconvenience. It's always amazed me that perception is as subjective as it is. You must have seen it too... One person's feast is another person's famine. I can still remember the way my mother burst out laughing when she one day told me that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder"and I replied "yeah, but it's funny how everyone agrees on ugly, ain't it?"

NOW you can understand what my parents went through. <grin>
Ever since I can remember, I've made a habit of looking at things from a different angle. It often annoys people, but even annoyance can be a learning experience, so I figure that I'm actually doing them a favor.

As far as all this rain is concerned, as long as I've got a roof over my head, I'm not going to complain about the weather. The one thing that

does bother me about it is that the rain leads to lots of grass pollen. And I'm allergic to grass pollen. I've been itchy for the past two weeks now, and all the non-prescription antihistamines haven't helped much. All in all, it's a pretty small problem. If this is the worst I ever have to endure, I'll be a very very happy man.

Let's get to the news and stuff from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
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Hallvard Tangeraas asks about configuring SuperBoot:

"I'm having trouble configuring some parameters of the boot-selector "Superboot" (http://www.notator.org/html/software.html#superboot).

I want to add the ability to select/deselect CPX modules as well, but I can't quote figure out what to enter in the "Configure 'other' file selections" option (you'll see it in the main screen of SuperBoot).

According to the help button in the program, files are renamed with an "X" at the end of the extension when deselected (which isn't what we want with the ".CPX" as this actually means it's active), and with "type 2" files it says that only one file can be active at a time (which is no good either, because I usually want more than just one CPX module to be active). So, what do I do?

or..... isn't it possible to have SuperBoot rename a file with anything other than "X" at the end when *deselected*?"

JØrôme Ginestet tells Hallvard:

"It seems not.

In "other" file selections, I set up a "type 1" type with ".CPZ" extender. It works perfectly, except that the display is inverted, compared to ACC files or auto folder files."

Mike Freeman tells JØrôme:

"Yeah, that was what I was about to suggest before I read this. Basically, you are fooling Superboot into thinking the file's actual extender should be CPZ, and then you do the opposite of what you intend - select the ones you *don't* want to run, and deselect the ones you *do* want to run. Kinda weird, but it should work fine."

Hallvard tells Mike:

"Hmmmm... yes, you're right.
Just tried it, and indeed: those *selected* (turned on) in the Superboot configuration program are actually all turned OFF when booting the computer, while all those CPX modules NOT selected are turned ON when booting.

Works fine, but not very user-friendly; and that's the key here as I'm presenting it for my (Notator) list-members (see URL in my signature) and want to keep everything as simple as possible.

Are there other boot selectors available which are:

1) in English

2) flexible. Apart from just the obvious AUTO programs and ACCessories, allows you to switch between different desktop setups ("DESKTOP.INF"/"NEWDESK.INF" files) or any other kind of file (I've configured Superboot to handle several "NVDI.INF" and "ASSIGN.SYS" files as I'm testing 3 different NVDI versions out with my system), CPX modules etc.

3) free or shareware

4) Preferably with a nice, intuitive graphic interface

5) easy to use!!!

Throughout the years I've downloaded lots of boot-selectors, but they're either too limited, aren't in English or don't work properly. That's why I've settled for Superboot; because even though it's shareware and not supported any longer it does most of what it's supposed to.

Still, the following seem to look pretty good: "DFboot" (shareware, only in French) and "McBoot" (freeware, only in German). Too bad as they both look promising."

Jim DeClercq tells Hallvard and everyone else:

"One thought here. There are at least three versions of xcontrol, and two of zcontrol. Set up separate folders for CPX files for two different file selectors, such as CPX_X, CPX_Z, and use superboot to load one control panel or the other.

My machine is TOS and MiNT, and some of the CPX files I need in TOS will keep the file selector from loading in MiNT. So, I use two different file selector programs, with different source folders, and superboot to load one or the other."

Toby Newman asks about turning disk images into real disks:

"I've downloaded some *.ST files (Games)
I've got an Atari STFM
I've got some Double Sided Double Density disks.
I'd like to turn the *.STs into disks to play on my Atari.

Problems:
Makedisk is DOS and does not run in winXP. I can't boot to DOS because my XP hard disk is NTFS.
I've got a computer running mandrake linux, but when I click on Makedisk it does nothing so I guess it's incompatible. (total linux newbie btw)

How can I use makedisk to turn my *.STs into real disks?"

'Tim' tells Toby:

"Burn all the .ST images you want to convert to CD-R. Boot to a DOS disk w/CD-ROM drivers and use STDISK to convert the images to disk!

You might have to to a 720k image FIRST then the other larger ones up to 830k, as I have found that if you try to to a larger one first it will fail,

but doing the 720k one first will do the trick!"

Toby tells Tim:

"Excellent advice - that worked a treat!"

Tim replies to Toby:

"No problem glad to help! Note if you want to covert a image that is over 830k in size you will have to transfer the file to ST and use a MSA to disk prog to make a disk That was the only way I could do it."

Hallvard Tangeraas asks about fVDI:

"I'm currently trying very hard to get NVDI to work with Notator SL (a MIDI sequencer/score program) but without much luck, and I'm getting fed up with it!

I know that there's a "competing" free alternative called "fVDI", but last time I checked it was still in the development stage, and I haven't heard much about it since.
So I'm wondering what the current status is, and if it's planned to ever become an NVDI replacement? Maybe it'll work better with Notator SL!"

Johan Klockars tells Hallvard:

"All my software is indefinitely in 'the development stage'.

What I mean by that is not that it's not perfectly usable as is, but rather that I will continue to work on it 'forever'.
Most updates are called 'betas', but that mostly refers to the fact that they are not made available in proper release archives with documentation and such.

Unlike MGIF (currently at v5.1, IIRC), fVDI has not yet passed the v1.0 milestone. Mainly because it still relies on an underlying VDI to handle the mouse and keyboard (but there's also a few features from the standard VDI that are missing or incomplete).

Well, everyone with an Eclipse/RageII graphics card is using fVDI.
As is everyone (with any sense at all who's running ARAnyM.
I don't know what percentage of the Galaxy (TT graphics card by Mario Becroft) users are using the fVDI driver. I do know that the current driver for that is not as developed as it should be, but improvements are supposedly under way.

For me it's been usable since '97.
There's not been much work done on the engine for the past couple of years, unfortunately, but that's about to change (some rather major internal changes are under way (but they should not really affect functionality in any major way)). There would have been more if I'd heard from people having problems, but that's quite uncommon.

It has certainly always been my intention to implement most of the VDI functions that NVDI supports. As long as I'm the only one working on fVDI, that will obviously take a while, though.

Well, since fVDI is GPLed, nothing is stopping you from doing something about this yourself. I don't own Notator SL, so I can not test it with fVDI.

Anyway, the drivers for standard Atari modes (monochrome, 16 colour and Falcon TC) have not been touched much since I installed my Eclipse/RageII (’98 or so). They probably have not all been updated to work with the current engine at all (although the changes needed should be minimal).

I guess I might do something about that once my CT60 arrives, though, since I won’t be able to install the Eclipse/RageII in the same Falcon as that accelerator."

Well folks, that’s it for this time around. ’Till next week, remember to keep your eye on the horizon, your shoulder to the wheel, your ear to the ground, and your back to the wall, and always... always be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week’s Gaming Section - Lara Croft Release Date Shaky?
Nintendo Winsa Hong Kong Piracy Case!
Europe Net Gaming Slow!

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->A-ONE’s Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

’Tomb Raider’ Game Launch Set for June in N. America

Eidos Plc, the British video game publisher, on Wednesday said it will release the latest version of its best-selling "Tomb Raider" game in North America on June 20, after a seven-month delay.

Eidos, which has scored an international hit with the "Tomb Raider" series, said "Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness," the ninth version of the Lara Croft story, will be released for Sony Corp.’s PlayStation 2 console.

But on Tuesday, Stuart Cruickshank, Eidos’ chief financial officer, told Reuters it was not clear whether it would make the June 20 launch.

An Eidos spokeswoman in the United States said Cruickshank was likely referring to the game’s European launch, but she did not have any further details on when the game would launch there. She said the U.S. version had received final approval from Sony for release.

Analysts have been awaiting word on whether Eidos can get the game out in time, saying a July launch or later would likely doom its key sales targets for the year.

The game was initially expected in November 2002, but that was pushed to February, then June.

Industry observers have grown increasingly curious about the whereabouts of Lara Croft, easily Eidos's top-selling franchise with 28 million units sold.

The game is expected to get a lift next month when the movie "Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life," starring Angelina Jolie, debuts at theaters.

Nintendo Wins Piracy Case Against Hong Kong Firm

Japanese videogame maker Nintendo Co Ltd said on Thursday it has won one of its "most significant anti-piracy judgments ever" against a Hong Kong firm that sold devices capable of copying its games and putting them on the Internet for limitless downloading.

In the ruling, a Hong Kong judge ordered Lik Sang International on May 29 to pay an interim amount of HK$5 million (US$641,000) in damages, Nintendo said.

A Lik Sang representative could not immediately be reached for comment.

Kyoto-based Nintendo had sought US$20 million in damages in its original complaint for lost revenues in 2001 and 2002, in a case that underscored the problem of rampant software piracy in China and adjacent Hong Kong.

The device at the heart of the complaint costs about US$45 and is capable of bypassing security features in Nintendo Game Boy games to extract their software, said Jodi Daugherty, director of anti-piracy for Nintendo of America Inc.

Once the software is extracted, it can be put on cards for use in other Game Boy consoles or uploaded to the Internet for limitless downloads throughout the world, she said.

Copied games typically sell for anywhere from US$5-15 each, compared with US$25-45 for legal products.

"This was an important case for Nintendo in battling Internet piracy at its source," Daugherty told Reuters in a phone interview from the United States. "We're continuing to take aggressive actions in China."

Rampant video game piracy has kept the world's major players out of China. Most sell their consoles at a loss and make up money through high-margin game sales.

Xbox maker Microsoft and Nintendo have so far avoided the market, where pirated versions of their games can sell for as little as 10 yuan (US$1.21) each.

The world's other major player, Sony Corp, maker of the PlayStation, tried

to launch in China earlier this year but was indefinitely delayed amid a mass of government red tape.

Following the recent Hong Kong ruling, Nintendo believes the cheap copying devices, which were manufactured in China, are no longer on the market, Daugherty said.

Nintendo estimates that it and its partners lost about US$650 million in sales last year due to piracy, while the entire industry lost more than US$3 billion.

Daugherty said Chinese trademark enforcement authorities had helped Nintendo conduct about three-quarters of its 125 raids IN China last year as the new World Trade Organization member starts to take intellectual property protection more seriously.

She said raids in 2002 were about double those in 2001, and are expected to go up further in 2003.

"Our piracy trends have changed," she said. "It used to be that a lot of the manufacturing was done in Taiwan. Then it’s shifted, so now we’re being more aggressive in China."

Microsoft, Sony Face Slow European Net Gaming Market

Microsoft Corp. on Wednesday said it had signed up 50,000 European customers to its Xbox Live Internet service in the first three months, a sign online gaming is slower out of the gates in Europe.

Online gaming is seen as an important emerging market for video game publishers and console makers looking to charge players subscriptions for multi-player action.

Microsoft and Sony Corp have led the charge, signing up over one million subscribers between them in the U.S. since launching services in the second half of 2002.

On Wednesday, Microsoft provided a more modest account of the European market. Since launching in mid-March, the software giant has signed up to Xbox Live 50,000 European gamers across much of Western Europe and over 500,000 American gamers.

The company plans to launch Xbox Live in eight more countries worldwide by year-end including European markets Austria, Denmark and Ireland, Peter Moore, Microsoft’s corporate vice president of retail sales and marketing, told attendees of a London video games conference on Wednesday.

A spokesman for Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE) said the company had signed up 3,000 UK gamers since launching its multi-player offering on June 11. The service will launch in Germany, France and Spain later this month, he said.

Both Microsoft and Sony sell online adapter kits. Sony’s carries a suggested retail price of 40 pounds ($67.04) while Microsoft charges 39 pounds and 59 euros ($69.21) in Continental Europe.

Analysts expect console makers and publishers to generate consistent

revenues from online gaming in two to three years, but warn that the costs of building out a network capable of supporting thousands of online gamers will be a cost drain in the near term.

Undaunted, Microsoft intends to have 100 Xbox Live game titles by the second quarter of next year, up from the 20 currently available in Europe.

Japan's Nintendo , maker of the GameCube console, which is battling neck and neck with Microsoft for the number two position in Europe, has said it will stay out of the online gaming sector until broadband usage builds to mass market levels.

($1=.5966 Pound)

($1=.8524 Euro)

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Microsoft Says W. Virginia to Drop Antitrust Cases

West Virginia's attorney general has agreed a settlement that would end his appeal of the landmark Microsoft Corp. antitrust settlement, leaving Massachusetts as the final hold-out pushing for stricter sanctions, the software giant said on Monday.

West Virginia Attorney General Darrell McGraw agreed to drop out of the appeal as part of a broad agreement that would also settle suits filed under state laws by state authorities and class action attorneys in West Virginia, Microsoft said.

The settlement further weakens the challenge to the Microsoft settlement and moves the company a step closer toward getting its legal problems behind it.

"It's another important step and more momentum in Microsoft's efforts to resolve these legal issues," Microsoft general counsel Brad Smith said. "What started with 20 states (opposing the settlement) is down to one."

West Virginia's McGraw was not immediately available for comment.

Last year, a lower court judge approved the settlement deal between Microsoft, the U.S. Justice Department and other states that had joined the case filed in 1998.

Massachusetts and West Virginia had asked a federal appeals court to strike down the settlement deal and impose more stringent sanctions against Microsoft.

In recent months Microsoft has settled separate cases filed by a number of

states, as well as an antitrust suit filed by its biggest competitor, AOL Time Warner Inc.

Smith said the West Virginia settlement is comparable to those that the company has reached with four other states, including California and Florida.

Under the terms of the agreement, Microsoft will provide as much as $18 million worth of vouchers to consumers who purchased Microsoft software.

The vouchers can be used to buy any software products, even from Microsoft competitors. Of those vouchers left unclaimed, up to half will go toward needy schools in the state, Smith said.

Microsoft’s settlement with the Justice Department requires the company to, among other things, give computer makers greater freedom to feature rival software on their machines by allowing them to hide some Microsoft icons on the Windows desktop.

Massachusetts and West Virginia had appealed the settlement to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia - the same court that ruled in June 2001 that Microsoft had illegally maintained its Windows operating system monopoly.

U.S. Urges Court to Uphold Microsoft Pact

The U.S. government on Wednesday urged an appeals court to uphold its landmark antitrust settlement with Microsoft Corp. against an attempted challenge of the pact by two computer trade groups.

The Justice Department asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia to uphold a lower court ruling that the Computer & Communications Industry Association and the Software and Information Industry Association lacked legal standing to challenge the settlement.

"The Microsoft settlement is in the public interest and the Department remains committed to actively enforcing its terms," Assistant Attorney General Hewitt Pate said in a statement.

The two groups, long-standing critics of Microsoft, had filed friend-of-the-court briefs with District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly arguing in favor of stricter sanctions against Microsoft.

In January, Kollar-Kotelly said the trade groups could file a private case against the world’s biggest software company if they wanted to pursue the matter further.

The appeals court had ruled in June 2001 that Microsoft had illegally maintained its Windows operating system monopoly, but rejected a trial court proposal to break the company in two.

In the settlement approved by Kollar-Kotelly last year, Microsoft agreed to measures that include giving computer makers greater freedom to feature rival software by allowing them to hide some Microsoft icons on the Windows desktop.

Of the 20 states that first joined the federal government in filing the

1998 complaint against Microsoft, only Massachusetts remains opposed to the pact.

West Virginia announced on Monday it had reached a settlement with Microsoft and would drop its appeal.

Last month the Justice Department told the appeals court it would not file a brief in the state challenge of the settlement.

Music Traders to Get Industry Warnings

Four Internet users at the center of a legal battle over copyright violations will receive cease-and-desist letters demanding they stop illegally offering free music for downloading, the Recording Industry Association of America said Wednesday.

A U.S. appeals court ruling earlier this month compelled Verizon Communications Inc. to hand over to the association the names of the four subscribers. A spokesman for the RIAA, Jonathan Lamy, declined to identify the subscribers or release copies of the letters.

Lamy said that a fifth person, a customer of Earthlink Inc., also will receive an identical cease-and-desist letter. Earthlink lawyers had balked at identifying their customer to the association until after the recent appeals court ruling.

The RIAA had said previously it hadn’t decided how it would proceed against those customers or whether it would identify them publicly.

The association sought the names of the subscribers under the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act. It permits music companies to force Internet providers to turn over the names of suspected music pirates upon subpoena from any U.S. District Court clerk’s office, without a judge’s signature.

Critics of the procedure contend judges ought to be more directly involved, given the potential privacy issues involved when a corporation is asked to reveal personal information about customers over an allegation of wrongdoing.

Verizon has challenged the constitutionality of such copyright subpoenas. Arguments in the appeals court are set for Sept. 16.

Senate to Examine Online Copyright Dispute

A dispute between Internet providers and the recording industry over copyright protection and customer privacy has drawn the attention of the Senate Commerce Committee chairman.

The committee’s chairman, Arizona Republican John McCain, said he would hold a hearing after Kansas Republican Sen. Sam Brownback asked him to look into the issue.

McCain’s decision means Congress will wade into a legal dispute that so far has played out in the courts. However, he did not say when the hearing

might be scheduled.

The Recording Industry Association of America, a trade group representing the five largest record labels, has been aggressively trying to shut down "peer to peer" networks like Kazaa and Morpheus, which allow users to download songs for free, and also has been pursuing individuals who use those services.

The RIAA asked Verizon Communications last summer for the name of one customer suspected of distributing more than 600 songs, but Verizon refused to do so without a court subpoena, saying such a move would violate privacy and due-process rights protected by the U.S. Constitution.

A U.S. court ordered Verizon to turn over the customer's name earlier this month, along with three other customer names subsequently requested by the RIAA.

The RIAA on Friday sent out cease-and-desist letters to the Verizon customers and one to an EarthLink Inc. customer.

Verizon is appealing the case, but Brownback has prepared a bill that would require the RIAA and other copyright investigators to file a formal lawsuit, rather than simply getting a court clerk's signature, before obtaining the names.

The current arrangement could allow stalkers, spammers, telemarketers and others with dubious motives to easily track down anyone they wanted, Brownback said on Thursday.

"I support the protection of copyright, but this is a big privacy issue," he said.

Brownback tried to attach his measure to another bill at a committee meeting Thursday morning, but withdrew it after McCain promised to hold a hearing.

Apple Poised To Release Speedy G5

Apple is set to unveil its new G5 processor, according to screenshots taken by Macintosh enthusiasts of the company's Apple store. A graphic detailing the G5 specifications was posted on the Apple site, apparently by mistake. The graphic was soon removed, but not before screenshots were captured by Macintosh aficionados at MacMinute.

The company is not officially releasing details ahead of its World Wide Developer's Conference on Monday, and Apple representatives were not immediately available for comment.

"Although it's a new processor, I'd expect to see less brandishing around the processor and more around the features and packages that the systems come in," said Gartner analyst Martin Reynolds. "I expect to see more about the Mac than I do about the processors.

"The challenge that Apple has had is that they've occasionally pulled past Intel on pure speed - I think those days are behind us now," he told NewsFactor. "I don't think we'll see them crowing about raw performance; instead, they're more likely to stick with Apple's core values where they

have a real advantage in terms of usability."

According to the screenshots, the forthcoming machines featuring the G5 processor will have a 1 GHz processor bus, and will clock in at 1.6 GHz, 1.8 GHz or 2 GHz. The desktops will include up to 8 GB DDR SDRAM.

They will feature Serial ATA hard drives, AGP 8x graphics cards to power the monitor, and three PCI or PCI-X expansion slots. For the first time on an Apple, the machines will have USB 2.0 - there will be three.

The new PowerPCs will features one FireWire 800 port, two FireWire 400 ports, and digital audio ports.

Although these specifications enable the Macintosh to be on par with leading-edge Windows boxes, Reynolds said that "this won't affect their market; they're really a niche player now."

Mac watchers expect the G5 to be built with IBM's 970 processor, shifting from its current chip producer Motorola. When IBM released the chip last October, the company said it would run at 1.8 GHz and feature a system bus running at 900 MHz.

The fact the G5's reported specifications run faster than those figures suggests the IBM chip has been upgraded since its release.

If Apple is to power its forthcoming computers on the IBM, that means it is continuing its PowerPC architecture, a design that some analysts expected them to move away from. In light of Intel's upcoming launch of its Pentium 4 with hyperthreading, IDC analyst Alan Promisel noted, Apple might benefit by moving its architecture to the Pentium side. "And Apple has been looking at it," he told NewsFactor.

The IBM 970 chip handles 64-bit data chunks, enabling far greater speed than the 32-bit processors that are the norm in most of today's desktops. But the forthcoming Apple will not gain a performance advantage from its 64-bit processor unless the OS and application software are optimized for it.

Apple has not yet announced at what point its forthcoming OS, Panther, will be optimized for 64-bit. But even if Apple were to optimize its software - such as its Safari browser - for 64-bit, it would still need to wait for third-party developers to follow suit.

That might take months, or longer. Quark, for example, only recently released a version of its popular XPress application optimized for OS X.

Because Apple is a member of HyperTransport, a consortium of companies that includes AMD, Sun Microsystems and Cisco Systems, the forthcoming G5 is widely expected to include the HyperTransport specification - a high-speed data link connecting two processors within a chipset.

The 1.0 version of HyperTransport boasts a data transfer rate of 6.4 to 12.8 gigabytes, based on configuration. This is an improvement over many chip connection technologies, and would mean a significant speed boost for the new Apple machines.

Apple's Developer Conference, ostensibly organized to provide a preview of the Panther OS to programmers, is shaping up to be a major media event. The keynote speech by Steve Jobs will be broadcast by satellite and wired into most of Apple's stores.

Companies rarely go to that much effort merely to court programmers.

Microsoft Will No Longer Make Mac Web Browser

Microsoft Corp. will no longer make new versions of its widely used Internet Explorer for Apple Computer Inc.’s Macintosh, the world’ largest software company said on Monday.

Apple, which ceded the computer desktop to Microsoft’s Windows operating system years ago, is currently preparing to release its own browser for accessing Internet content called Safari.

Apple’s plan to develop its own Web browser was launched in January after a five-year development deal between Microsoft and Apple had lapsed.

Microsoft said it would continue to develop its Office document, spreadsheet, presentation and productivity software for the Macintosh.

"We’re committed as ever to the Mac platform," said Jessica Sommer, product manager for Microsoft’s Macintosh Business Unit.

Microsoft’s decision could make it more difficult for Macintosh users hoping to access Web content that is tailored for the Internet Explorer, which, like Windows, has more than a 95 percent market share. Microsoft’s Sommer said that the two companies were talking over user content compatibility issues between future versions of IE and Safari.

Microsoft said its Web browser will be developed more closely in line with Windows, which is slated for an overhaul in 2005 that Microsoft said will make it less vulnerable to security breaches.

Netscape, the poster child of the Internet in the 1990s, gave up its leading position in Web browsers after Microsoft targeted the market as a key strategic initiative and scrambled to develop the Internet Explorer.

Apple Responds to Microsoft Dropping Internet Explorer

For the first time since Microsoft Corp. made its decision to stop development of Internet Explorer for the Macintosh, Apple Computer Inc. on Tuesday made a statement regarding the decision.

"Safari is the fastest browser on the Mac, and has become the browser of choice for millions of Mac users," said Apple in a statement given to MacCentral. "The Safari beta program has been an incredible success, and we will be releasing Safari 1.0 soon. Microsoft’s Macintosh Business Unit felt it was a good time to reassign their resources working on IE to the revenue-producing Mac products they are working on, such as the next versions of Office, Entourage (including an Exchange client) and Virtual PC."

Last Friday, Microsoft officially dropped development of Internet Explorer for Macintosh. While support for the product has not ended, future updates - including one released yesterday - will be maintenance and security

updates only, no new features will be introduced.

In explaining their decision, Microsoft’s Macintosh Business Unit Product Manager, Jessica Sommer, cited Apple’s new Web browser Safari and the fact that Apple can work with the application and the operating system like no other developer can.

"The feedback we’re getting from our customers and the features they’re asking for is all pointing to Apple and Safari," said Sommer. "Apple has better resources because they have Safari and the operating system."

Despite the fact that Internet Explorer development has stopped, Sommer said the rest of Microsoft’s Mac product line is safe, saying the company is working hard on the next version of Office and many other products.

"We are working diligently on the next version of Office - these [IE and Office] are not connected in any way. Office is still intact and going strong - there are no plans to stop development on Office for Mac even after the next version is released."

Linux Creator to Work Full-Time on Development

The creator of the free Linux operating system, Linus Torvalds, said he will take leave as a fellow at chip designer Transmeta Corp. to join a nonprofit consortium aimed at speeding the adoption of Linux.

As a fellow at Open Source Development Lab, or OSDL, Finnish-born Torvalds will lead the development of Linux, which Torvalds created in 1991 as a university student and which is gaining acceptance in heavy-duty corporate computing.

International Business Machines Corp.and Hewlett-Packard Co., the world’s No. 1 and No. 2 computer companies, respectively, have for the last several years been building their Linux offerings. Sun Microsystems Inc. has waffled somewhat on its Linux strategy, but does sell computers running Linux.

"It feels a bit strange to finally officially work on what I’ve been doing for the last 12 years, but with the upcoming (Linux release) it makes sense to be able to concentrate fully on Linux," Torvalds said in a news release issued jointly by low-power chip designer Transmeta and OSDL.

The source code, or underlying software blueprint, for Linux is freely available, and developers around the world collaborate to refine its development.

Founded in 2000, OSDL has data centers in Portland, Oregon, and Yokohama, Japan used by Linux developers from around the world, OSDL said.

The group has financial backing from Computer Associates International Inc., Fujitsu, Hitachi, HP, IBM, Intel Corp., NEC and others, and is pushing industry efforts to make Linux ready for use in corporate data centers and in telecommunications networks, OSDL said in its statement.

"The computing market is still questioning how far and how fast Linux can go as an enterprise-ready platform," George Weiss, vice president and research director for research firm Gartner, said in a statement.

Revenue for Linux-based servers grew 62 percent in 2002, albeit from a small base, while overall sales of servers dropped 8 percent in the same time period, according to Gartner Dataquest, a market research company. By 2007, Gartner predicts Linux may hold a 15 percent share of the worldwide server market.

The vast majority of servers in the world run either on variants of the Unix operating system, sold by IBM, HP and Sun, or on Microsoft's operating system designed for servers.

Keep Printouts of E-Mails or Risk Losing Them

Electronic communication is here to stay and will become more popular than ever but scientists warned Wednesday that records of immense historical value could be lost if printouts are not made.

Changes in formats, servers and institutional policies and problems with memory space mean valuable information could simply disappear.

"Most serious is the potential loss of records that have immense historical value," said Errol Friedberg of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas.

Unlike earlier historical documents that were carved in stone, written on parchment or printed on paper and kept in a safe place, preserving electronic communication poses problems.

"It is nothing short of terrifying to contemplate the probable magnitude of lost records as yesterday's electronic storage devices become incompatible with today's software applications," Friedberg and his colleagues said in a letter published in the science journal Nature.

With daily e-mail traffic expected to grow from 9.7 billion pieces in 2000 to more than 35 billion in 2005, the scientists fear problems will increase. Few emails are translated into hard copy.

"The pen may be mightier than the sword, but a single mouse-click can destroy products of inestimable value," Friedberg warned.

E-mail for Everybody

Some of the last bastions of the paper-based world are entering the digital age. E-mail - a productivity messaging tool that most workers will tell you they simply cannot live without - is now being pushed for the estimated 30% of the worldwide work force that doesn't have an inbox, much less a desk.

Using kiosks or shared desktops, factory workers, bank tellers, flight attendants, and others can log into their new e-mail accounts and receive information like pay stubs and corporate memos. Doing so saves their managers the expenses that would be incurred from the paper, printing and postage needed to send out information.

But that's not the real benefit, according to David Ferris, president of

Ferris Research Inc., a messaging and collaboration specialist in San Francisco. He said that the value of extending e-mail to this breed of worker comes from "better communication, better quality of work and reduced cycle times."

Vendors are hoping that those improvements get businesses to open up their checkbooks.

"Everyone is pretty much paying attention to these users at some level, because they're all looking for ways to expand the [messaging] market," said Michael Osterman, a messaging expert who runs Black Diamond, Wash.-based Osterman Research Inc.

Just last month, two new offerings hit the market. IBM's Lotus unit released Workplace Messaging, a highly scalable, Web-based e-mail system built on the WebSphere application server and using DB2 as a message store. Meantime, Sendmail Inc. combined its Workforce Mail with Hewlett-Packard Co.'s ProLiant Servers and Intel Corp.'s Centrino wireless platform to form a Linux-based, low-end messaging package.

Companies like Rockliffe Inc. and Critical Path Inc. already have products for the baseline user, and messaging powerhouse Microsoft Corp. emphasizes the capabilities of Outlook Web Access.

According to Lotus manager of messaging solutions John Caffrey, Workplace Messaging takes his company's more robust Lotus Notes and "strips it down." Because it's entirely Web-based, administrators don't have to worry about desktop installations. They also benefit from single-entry provisioning of new users in an LDAP directory. Version 1.0 is shipping with e-mail only, though Lotus promises personal calendar capabilities in future releases. The list price for Workplace Messaging is $29 per user, but Lotus said that, with discounts, the three-year average total cost of ownership is $3 per user per month. That's compared with the roughly $10 to $20 monthly charges most organizations pay for all the bells and whistles included in a client-server mailbox, Ferris said.

When evaluating low-end messaging tools, cost is just one factor to consider, according to Osterman. He recommends taking a close look at the functionality offered and determining exactly what your organizations' "deskless" workers need. He also thinks companies should assess security and authentication concerns, as well as the integration capabilities between the low-end offerings and existing, fully functional e-mail systems.

However, Osterman doesn't put extending e-mail capabilities at the top of his spending list for messaging managers. Instead, he thinks most organizations would be wiser to consider investments in enterprise instant messaging or spam control. Overall, Osterman forecasts that roughly 20% to 30% of nontraditional e-mail users will wind up with a company inbox. He predicts that outsourcers - who can spare e-mail administrators any new messaging headaches - will eventually become huge suppliers of "deskless" e-mail.

Even Lotus' Caffrey admits that products like Workplace Messaging have the potential to open up a can of workplace worms. Businesses must consider the implications of extending e-mail to a new type of worker. Companies may need to establish and enforce strict messaging policies to prevent unnecessary attachments from clogging corporate bandwidth. Some companies may even want to restrict these new e-mail accounts from receiving external mail.

Plus, delivering e-mail to workers also requires giving them time to check it. Some organizations may be reluctant to pull factory workers off the assembly line so they can log on. Issues like this may ultimately fall into the lap of labor unions.

"Some companies have non-e-mail users for a reason," Osterman said. "Companies don't want to pay these employees to get e-mail."

Microsoft Sues to Stem Growing Flood of Email Spam

Microsoft Corp. said on Tuesday it had filed 15 lawsuits in the United States and the United Kingdom aimed at stemming the growth of email spam, or electronic junk mail, an increasingly costly problem that has been blamed for customer defections.

The 15 companies and individuals named in the lawsuits were responsible for flooding Microsoft's MSN Internet service with more than 2 billion unsolicited emails touting everything from get-rich-quick schemes to pornographic Web sites.

The move to open a legal front follows recent steps by Microsoft and other Internet industry participants to beef up their spam-blocking technology and share information.

"We recognize that spam is a global problem," Microsoft general counsel Brad Smith told reporters, "We are ramping up our efforts to combat spam around the world."

The lawsuits were filed in Washington state, Microsoft's home state, as well as in California and Britain, against companies and individuals involved in the email spam business.

Smith said that Microsoft would also increase its efforts to protect consumers from spam using better technology such as blocking and filtering tools, and also collaborate with other Internet businesses.

Microsoft said that the lawsuits were aimed at making "spammers" stop their activities and also would seek monetary damages.

Separately the United States and 29 other countries announced an effort on Tuesday to track down spammers, telemarketers and other scam artists who operate across international borders.

The agreement would make it easier for governments to investigate and apprehend fraudsters who operate on a global basis, officials with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission and several other countries said.

Complaints about international fraud nearly doubled to 30,798 last year, according to FTC statistics, while Nigerian e-mail hucksters fleeced U.S. residents out of at least $100 million last year, according to the Customs Service.

Even spammers based in the United States commonly route their messages through overseas computers to cover their tracks, experts say.

US Lawmakers Move to Criminalize Some "Spam" Electronic Mail

US lawmakers took aim at "spam" messages, as two separate bills worked their way through the US Senate, including one that would make sending some unsolicited e-mails a crime.

Utah Senator Orrin Hatch co-sponsored one bill introduced Thursday, the Criminal Spam Act of 2003, which targets people who hijack computer systems or use other fraudulent means to send unsolicited commercial e-mail.

"The abusive practices of fraudulent spammers threaten to choke the lifeblood of the electronic age," Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch said in a statement.

"Current federal law does not adequately address the tactics sophisticated spammers use to conceal their identities, evade Internet service provider filters, and exploit the Internet by promoting pornographic web sites, illegally pirated software, questionable health products, pyramid schemes and other 'get rich quick' scams," said Hatch, a Republican from Utah, who co-sponsored the legislation with Vermont Democrat Patrick Leahy.

"Ridding Americas inboxes of deceptively delivered spam will significantly advance our fight to clear electronic channels for legitimate communications," Leahy said.

Their bill would make it a crime to hijack the identities of other computer uses to send bulk commercial e-mail or to conceal key information about the e-mail's source.

Violators could face up to five years in prison.

A separate anti-spam bill, authored by Democratic Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon and Republican Senator Conrad Burns of Montana, was unanimously approved Thursday by the Commerce Committee.

Wyden said in a statement that his bill aimed to "slow the flow of spam," but another anti-spam crusader in the US legislature, said the bill, while a good start, didn't go far enough.

"Any spam measure that comes out of Congress needs to go after spam as aggressively as spammers go after the public," said Senator Charles Schumer.

"I'd like to see an even stronger measure that empowers e-mail users with the ability to keep spam out of their in-boxes and has stronger punitive measures," he said, adding that he would proposed an amendment to add teeth to the Burns-Wyden bill when goes to the floor of the full Senate later this year.

Schumer, a New York Democrat, earlier this year introduced his own bill that would impose heavy fines for spamming, mandate jail time for repeat offenders, and create a "Do-Not-Spam" list of e-mail addresses.

HP Will Bundle Antispam Software on PCs

Saying it wants to protect children from inappropriate material and give customers a more "positive" computing experience, Hewlett-Packard will bundle antispam software with its new desktop PCs.

The company will preload InterMute's SpamSubtract Pro product on new HP Pavilion and Compaq Presario PCs, according to InterMute.

Customers who purchase the new PCs will be able to use the spam-blocking software free of charge for 30 days. After the trial period, customers have the option to purchase a full license for the software, priced at $30, from the InterMute Web site.

SpamSubtract Pro acts like a spam firewall, using a specialized algorithm and database of spam e-mail identifiers such as obscene words and offensive images, as well as commercial solicitations, according to a company spokesperson.

Incoming e-mail messages are sorted into folders for confirmed spam, suspected spam, and "friendly" messages, the spokesperson says.

The product is also capable of masking offensive words in spam e-mail messages and preventing image attachments from being previewed, according to InterMute.

Customers who do not purchase a license after the trial period will continue to be able to use the product to quarantine spam with obscene words and images. However, commercial solicitations will no longer be flagged, the spokesperson says.

While bundling software on new PCs is a common practice, HP was interested in having some of the "family friendly" antispam features stay on even for customers who do not choose to purchase a SpamSubtract license, according to InterMute.

SpamSubtract runs on the Microsoft Windows platform and works with common e-mail clients such as Outlook, Outlook Express, and Eudora, according to InterMute.

The company also develops and markets a selection of related products, intended to block unwanted intrusions online.

For example, its Message Subtract blocks unwanted Messenger Service ads, a misleading new form of pop-up that resembles Windows alert messages.

InterMute also markets AdSubtract, a Web-filtering and ad-blocking utility that guards against banner and pop-up ads.

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